

# The Spokesman

PRINCETON DAY SCHOOL

SEMPER LUCEAT

SPRING 2021 VOL. 57, ISSUE 2

## Anti-Asian Hate and the Atlanta Spa Shooting

The Asian-American  
community at PDS reflects on  
the impact of anti-Asian hate  
in America

SAMAY NANDWANA, XI  
PRINT SPORTS EDITOR

On Tuesday, March 16, in Acworth, Georgia, there was a series of mass shootings at three spas, killing eight people, including six women of Asian-American descent. The suspect, a man by the name of Robert Aaron Long, was arrested and taken into custody as a result of the crimes. However, Long was not charged with a hate crime for the shootings, although many have claimed that the shootings were racially motivated. As a result, many have become outraged due to the rise in hate crimes against Asian Americans.

The indignation sparked across the country is due to the fact that the shooting in the Atlanta area was not an isolated incident; there have been numerous attacks against members of the Asian American community, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. A new study by the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism has shown that although overall hate crimes decreased by 7 percent in 2020, hate crimes against Asian Americans specifically increased by 150 percent. There have been stories of a Filipino woman being kicked to the ground, an Asian-American woman being assaulted in Manhattan, and countless

continued on page 2



Anti-Asian hate crimes are both part of America's history and its present day  
(Artwork/Ava Fong '23)



Protestors at the Stop Asian Hate rally at Princeton show support for Asian Americans (Photos/Hear Our Voices)



Autism is symbolized by an infinite rainbow loop, demonstrating the diversity of individuals on the autism spectrum (Artwork/Helen Amon '23)

## Autism Acceptance Month: What It Is & How PDS is Raising Awareness

PDS is making a conscious effort to raise awareness  
about the autistic community

OLIVER SILVERIO, X  
STAFF WRITER

Every April, Autism Acceptance Month is celebrated across the United States. Originally launched by the Autism Society of America in 1972 as "National Autistic Children's Week," the goal of the month is to increase awareness of

autism's signs, symptoms, and realities. The Autism Society of America does this by distributing digital and printable resources, organizing events, and creating partnerships with businesses and institutions. Their current campaign, "Celebrate Differences," seeks to inform communities about autism in order to promote

continued on page 2

## Invisible Discrimination at PDS

Healthy discussion is imperative to addressing the  
microaggressions faced by minorities at PDS

HELLEN JIN, X  
PRINT FEATURES EDITOR

Many people aren't educated enough about the way in which discrimination shows up. That contributes to the discriminations being invisible," remarked Princeton Day School Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Anthony McKinley. Discrimination is a long-standing issue that we read about in newspapers, textbooks, and even social media posts. In discussions, whether in school or just with friends, we talk about the horrors

of discrimination and condemn it to the utmost extent. It is prevalent in every nook and cranny of our society, and it even pervades the walls of our school. Yet, discrimination comes in all shapes and forms, some of which are so interwoven into our lives that we simply normalize it. This is invisible discrimination.

Without personal experiences, it is hard to realize the presence of subtle discrimination in our classrooms and hallways.

continued on page 3

## Reopening After COVID-19: New Jersey's Current Status

New Jersey is optimistic about loosening restrictions  
after the devastating COVID-19 pandemic

MISHA COHEN & KELLY CHRISTIE, IX  
STAFF WRITERS

On May 18, 2020, Governor Phil Murphy released a multi-step plan to accomplish a safe and useful return for New Jersey back to normal life after COVID-19. In Mercer County, triggers for each phase of the plan will be evaluated by the President's Leadership Team. "The protection of public health and safety should be the primary factor in all decisions made regarding the resumption of

any on-campus activities," as stated in the MCCC COVID-19 reopening plan. However, before moving to each new phase, the effectiveness of the current status, such as the number of cases and/or how much or little the virus is spreading, must be looked at and modified, if necessary. If there are any concerns, the PLT will review them and evaluate.

According to Director of Wellness Services Maritoni

continued on page 3

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the Spokesman

Volume 56

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Two protestors in Princeton hold up a sign saying ‘Stop Asian Hate’ (Photo/Hear Our Voices)

## Autism Acceptance Month (cont’d)

acceptance and inclusion. Recently, there has been a shift in the name from “Autism Awareness Month” to “Autism Acceptance Month.” This change of name itself aims to address the need for acceptance of the autism community. Acceptance is often one of the largest barriers to success, and focusing on it will allow people with autism to access more opportunities in areas such as education, employment, and healthcare.

Autism is a developmental disability that can impact a person’s social skills, relationships, communicative skills, and self-control. The disability usually appears and is diagnosed during early childhood. There is no single definite cause for autism, but brain scans show it is related to abnormalities in the structure or function of the brain. Autism is diagnosed on a spectrum, meaning it impacts each person to varying degrees. Each case of autism is different, and an accurate diagnosis may involve multiple medical and psychological professionals. The diagnosis involves long term observations of an individual’s communication skills, social activities, and interests. Tests are also performed to determine whether or not these symptoms could be the result of another medical or psychological disorder. Common characteristics of people with autism can include highly intense and focused interests, a preference for sameness and routine, difficulties forging and maintaining friendships, and difficulties holding a conversation. The prevalence of autism in the United States has increased recently: 1 of 54 children were diagnosed with the disorder in 2020, up from 1 of 125 in 2010. More information and resources regarding autism can be found on the Autism Society website,

[www.autism-society.org](http://www.autism-society.org).

Additionally, the PDS community is making efforts to raise awareness during Autism Acceptance Month. One of the potential events, a virtual arts and crafts geared towards autistic kids in the Princeton area, is being planned and organized by Sophomore Neha Khandkar. Khandkar noted, “I’m super excited that PDS is finally thinking about autism acceptance because I think in selective schools we sometimes neglect to talk about certain topics since they don’t pertain to the majority of the student body. The possible event is not so much the big deal as is the talk about it and the raising awareness aspect.”

Recently, PDS has been encouraging students to plan initiatives that raise awareness on specific topics, including autism. The importance of the event being student-run was emphasized by Upper School History Teacher and Service Learning Advisor Amanda Briski, who remarked, “As with any initiative where we are trying to bring awareness, the best projects are student-led in terms of concepts and execution. Motivation coming from students would make the project more authentic and allows it to reach more of the students.” This will hopefully allow PDS students to learn and retain important information about autism.

This year is the first year that PDS has taken major steps to make its community more aware of autism and its impact. It is very important to raise awareness about this topic because it will allow students to become more informed and aware of autism and how it affects different people. In the future, PDS will hopefully make a commitment to an annual series of events during Autism Awareness Month that inform and educate our community about autism. □

## Anti-Asian Hate (cont’d)

other examples.

Given the rise of hate crimes against the Asian American community, many have been forced to have some uncomfortable, yet necessary conversations to address this problem. For instance, junior Linda Qu, cohead of the Chinese club, pointed out that the “*Hear Our Voices* magazine that strives to make Asian American voices heard” is a great avenue for Asian American students to express themselves. *Hear our Voices* was founded by sophomore Kyler Zhou to create a platform for Asian-American voices to be heard by allowing students to share their stories.

Additionally, the Asian American, Pacific Islander, and Desi Affinity group (AAPIDA) has been working to create a safe discussion space for Asian American students to process these events in a group setting and reflect upon what they would like to see in the future. AAPIDA cohead and junior Milan Shah explained that “AAPIDA and all the affinity group spaces are incredibly important for student groups to be able to talk, listen, and process in general with others during a time when they may be confused or scared or don’t exactly know what to feel about the country’s current events.” Many have found that during these times, it is important to find spaces where students can discuss together,

and PDS affinity groups exist for this purpose.

These recent events have forced people to start thinking about issues that Asian Americans face, including the widespread prevalence of stereotypes, lack of diversity, and more. For example, many Asian Americans often feel that they are depicted poorly in mainstream media such as television and film. Asian Americans may feel that they are portrayed in stereotypical roles and are not given the representation necessary to be able to relate to cultural icons. In terms of how this issue may persist at PDS, Asian American students at PDS also feel that they are not represented enough in the faculty because of the limited diversity. For instance, junior Milind Singh stated that “I don’t have adults I can speak with who relate to my experiences.” Although students like Singh state that they consider PDS a kind and accepting place, finding people of similar background to relate to can be difficult.

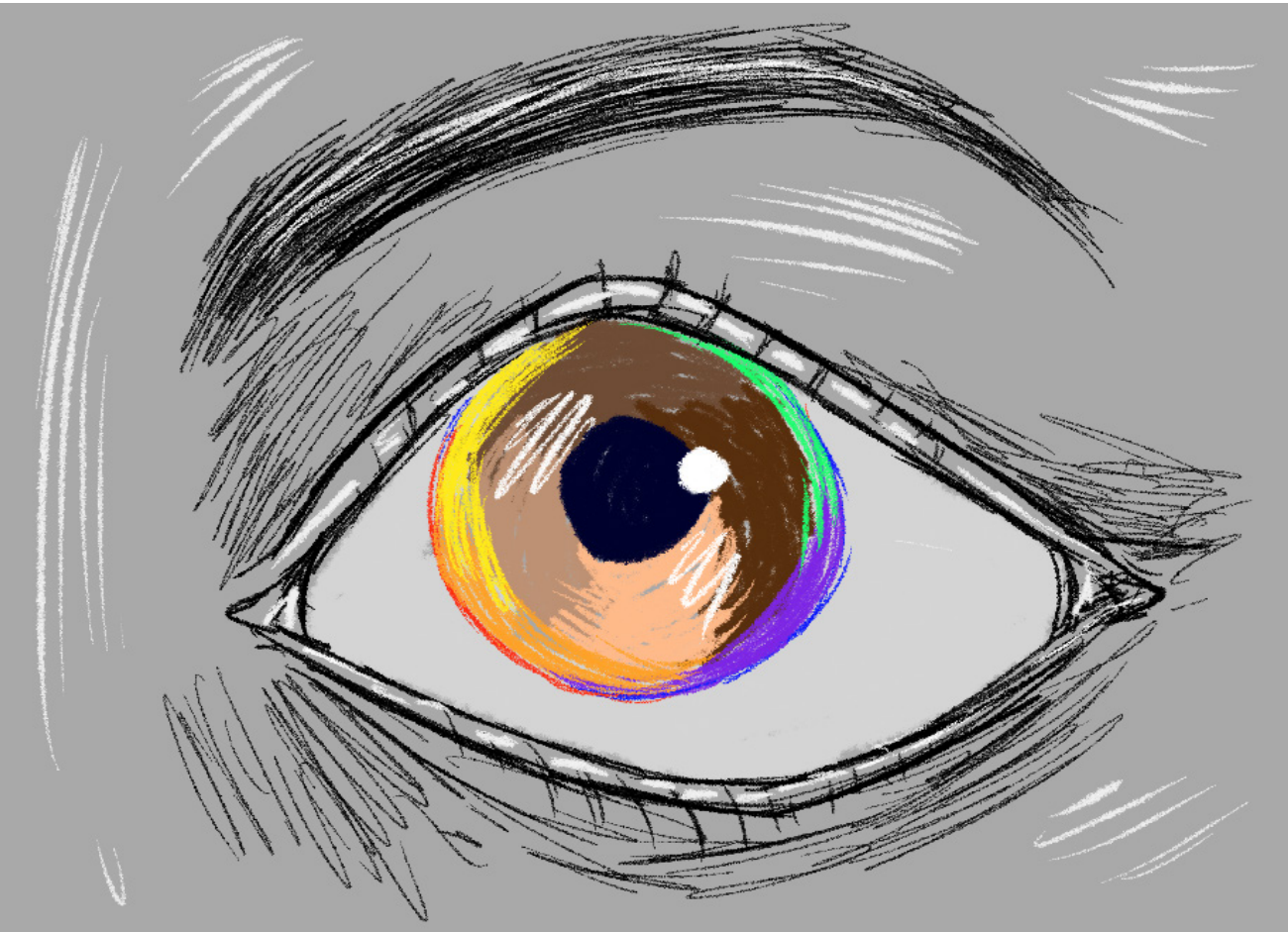
Ultimately, the shootings in Atlanta, along with other recent hate crimes have prompted a much needed conversation about the Asian American community. Although PDS has done an exceptional job of maintaining diversity and responding to these events, it is important that the school continues to ensure that student voices are being heard. □



Invisible Discrimination at PDS (cont’d)

To many individuals in the Princeton Day School community, discrimination seems intangible. Without personal experiences, it is hard to realize the presence of subtle discrimination in our classrooms and hallways. Sophomore Kyler Zhou, member of the AAPIDA affinity group, explains, “The extent to which racism exists in our school is little-known. It’s something that people often gloss over and fail to understand how harmful it is to people’s mental health.” Similarly, sophomore Ziya Brittingham shares her own experiences with facing

subtle discrimination, revealing, “On many occasions people have told me how they ‘loved my hair’ and proceeded to touch my hair without my permission, as if I were part of a petting zoo.” These experiences from Zhou and Brittingham are just some of the many inconspicuous acts of discrimination faced by the members of PDS. This casual discrimination often originates from the lack of acknowledgement of different narratives. Mr. McKinley emphasized the importance of educating people and listening to others’ narratives.



The diverse community of students at PDS opens its eyes to the struggles of minorities (Artwork/Kayla Zhang ‘24)

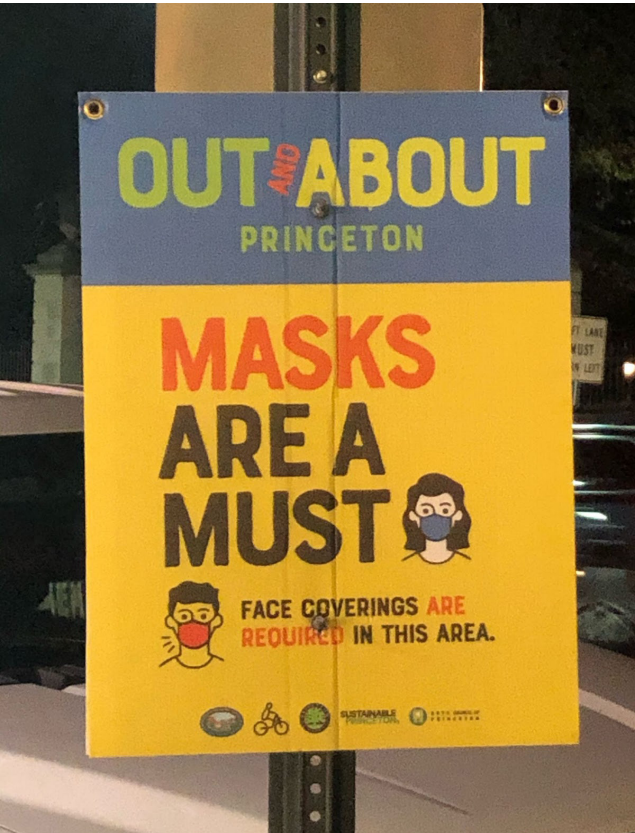
“We need to commit to educating ourselves, listening to different narratives and learning about the ways to stand up for each other.” It is also important to note the danger of “cancel” culture, since it often does not resolve acts of discrimination that result from the lack of education. Although it temporarily holds the person accountable, it does not allow room for growth and understanding as a community. “There needs to be room for mistakes to be made, and we need to hold each other accountable for their actions,” said Mr. McKinley, who believes that active learning will progress our community as a whole. PDS has taken initiatives towards educating its community members. For example, many humanities courses offered at PDS have specially designed units to touch on topics such as discrimination. Mr. McKinley shared his experience with the English Department here at PDS, acknowledging, “As an English teacher myself, we certainly talked a lot about discriminations in the classroom. When we taught the China unit, we had a lot of conversations about discrimination.” Even outside of the classroom, education regarding diversity and inclusiveness is often presented to students through Upper School gatherings, clubs, and affinity groups. “I love that *the Spokesman* is dedicating themselves to talk about these issues. The more we normalize these types of conversations, the better off we will be as a community,” Mr. McKinley concluded. Discussing issues such as discrimination is strongly encouraged, as educating yourself and others in our community is the key to a more inclusive environment. □

Reopening After COVID-19 (cont’d)

Shah, “It takes time for things to get better and the state’s reopening plan tries to manage the risks of increased transmission of the virus with the benefits of allowing for more movement in the community.” New Jersey’s reopening plan consists of three phases. Phase one consists of reopening essential stores like grocery stores, elective healthcare, as well as allowing drive-through and curbside retail and activities. The second phase signals the opening of limited social activities like indoor dining and athletic events. The final phase expands the capacities for retail stores, restaurants, entertainment centers, and gyms. It is expected after these three phases that New Jersey will have a changed but “normal” economy. As of late, New Jersey does not encourage any non-essential interstate travel, but there are exceptions put in place to not entirely avoid travel. Travelers are encouraged to get a viral test one to three days before the trip and once more three to five days after. If someone does test positive, they must self-quarantine for at least 10 days and postpone the trip. If the test is negative, travelers must still quarantine for 7 days after the trip. If testing is unavailable, travelers must quarantine for 10 days after their trip. “However, there are some essential travel restrictions such as individuals traveling to and from the state for work, individuals traveling to and from the state for medical reasons, including individuals providing comfort and support to a patient, military personnel traveling to the

state by order or directive of a state or Federal military authority, and individuals traveling to comply with a court order, such as child custody,” as stated on the official site of the State of the New Jersey. In conclusion, New Jersey’s economy is on its way back to a relatively normal environment. COVID-19 has disrupted a lot of everyday activities, but slowly we have been able to bring

them back in accordance with the new guidelines. Even though traveling is not encouraged, New Jersey has been able to reinstate itself safely with its new protocols to prevent the spreading of COVID-19. Along with travel, Governor Murphy’s three-phase plan should continue to work efficiently to achieve the goal of a full reopening some time in the near future. □



A sign in Princeton reminds people to wear their masks



Life in Princeton begins to return back to normal. (Photos/Mehak Dhaliwal ‘22)



## NOW and Women's History Month at PDS

DANIELLE IM X

VAISHNAVI BHALLA, X

COPY EDITOR, FEATURES ASSOCIATE

**W**omen's History Month takes place during the month of March to celebrate the accomplishments and successes of women worldwide. Started in March of 1987, Women's History Month originally began as Women's History Week and was officially designated the whole month in 1995. The National Organization for Women, or NOW, was founded in 1966 at a conference on the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. NOW aims to further equality for women in the United States through strategies such as education and advocacy. Cohead of the NOW chapter at PDS and junior Mehak Dhaliwal emphasized the importance of intersectionality to NOW, saying, "A large part of Women's History Month is to give voice to the underrepresented, and honor those who don't usually get a voice, so it's always essential to value intersectionality." According to NOW cohead Nazareth Mehreteab, the NOW chapter at PDS aims to "foster a safe space for students to discuss social justice topics and current events."

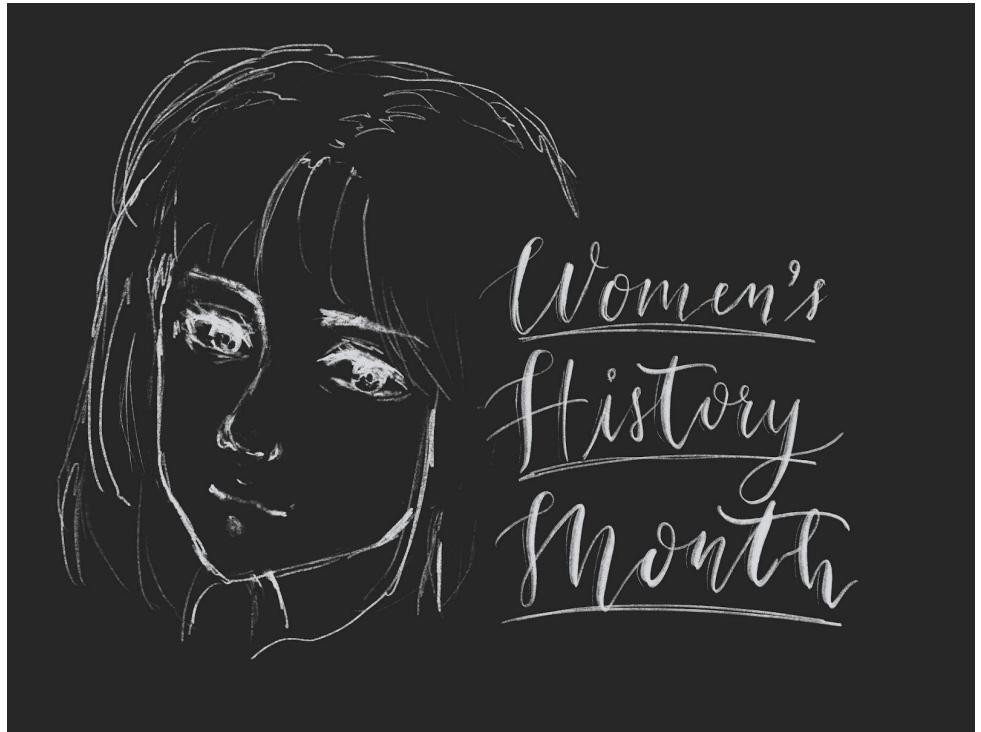
NOW's website highlights more issues that womxn, particularly womxn of color, face and also describes ways in which one can help. Currently, NOW has five campaigns: "(1) End the Criminalization of Trauma; (2) Ratify the Equal Rights Amendment; (3) Mobilize for Reproductive Justice; (4) Advance Voting Rights; and (5) Protect Immigrant Rights." NOW has signed multiple letters pushing for legislation involving womxn's

rights, such as increased protection against sexual assault and access to reproductive healthcare.

At the moment, NOW is in a lawsuit to stop clinic violence (NOW v. Scheidler), a case which began 25 years ago. The lawsuit comprises a number of cases that work towards stopping illegal violence that occurs against abortion clinics, such as bombings and invasions. NOW believes it is crucial to ensure that womxn feel safe and comfortable while attending these clinics, and the lawsuit is one part of the many actions that they are taking to achieve this goal.

NOW primarily focuses on intersectionality, or the interconnection of different social identifiers such as race and gender, and aims most of its policies towards marginalized womxn. In addition, the organization empowers womxn to stay engaged in politics and encourages young girls in middle and high school to found more NOW chapters to educate their communities. To further encourage youth involvement, NOW has created the Young Feminist Task Force (YFTF), which "works to promote and sustain diversity in [NOW]." NOW's website also includes several informative articles that cover a variety of issues ranging from global feminism to ways womxn can learn to embrace and love their own bodies. Lastly, NOW has a section on their page on which anyone can donate a sum of money to them, which is a small but great way anyone can help them in their cause.

The PDS NOW club meetings cover a gamut of topics ranging from current events to media analysis. Mehreteab provided some examples: "Recently, we've had a wide range of



Womens' issues are honored throughout the month of March (Artwork/Amy Zhou '23)

meetings, everything from the 2020 presidential election to Amanda Gorman's amazing Inauguration Day poem to female representation in film." Dhaliwal added, "Shoutout to our sister group GLOW!" and reiterated the importance of intersectionality and the inclusion of "trans women, queer women, women of color, and all types of people who identify as women in your celebrations and recognitions!"

There are many ways to observe Women's History Month. One of the best ways, according to Mehreteab, is "educating yourself about the contributions of womxn in various fields, whether that be in STEM, the arts, or the political space." NOW has also created a list of resources for the PDS community to learn more about Women's History Month, which can be accessed using the QR code to the right. Dhaliwal also provided some examples, such as "listening to music

created by so many diverse womxn" or "watching movies that accurately give a voice to this fabulous but often underrepresented group." While celebrating this Women's History Month, it is important to learn about and listen to the experiences of women, especially, as emphasized by Dhaliwal, "through the lens of minorities, and learning more about female icons who are Black, Asian-American, queer, trans, Indigenous, Latinx, etc." □



## Senior Project Updates, and What Seniors are Doing

ARSHAAN SAYED, X

PRINT NEWS EDITOR

**W**ith college admissions season almost over, many seniors have embarked on their Senior Projects. A tradition that spans several decades in PDS history, Senior Projects are a culmination of educational, artistic, or service-based experiences in an ambitious project carried out by PDS seniors during their last four weeks of high school. Seniors tackle a wide variety of subjects, from working under a professor at a biology lab to writing and publishing their own music. They use this time to explore a topic of interest in-depth without extraneous distractions during the school day. However, as we are still in the time of COVID-19, the school must take precautions while offering this opportunity.

The limitations of Senior Projects this year are relatively loose compared to those of last year. Last year, with the building locked down, students could not

access any PDS resources such as the ceramics studio, art room, photographic lab, and woodshop. They were also unable to do most in-person internships or other activities. This year, seniors will not face these restrictions. According to Upper School Science Teacher Brian Mayer, the Senior Project Coordinator, "We are mostly back to what I would consider normal with a few exceptions. Students are allowed to have in-person internships



Senior Aaliyah Sayed plans to create a unique board game (Photo/Aaliyah Sayed '21)

as long as they remain away from campus and are allowed to use school resources in the arts room and STEAM Center." Although seniors who choose to be remote will still follow last year's restrictions, PDS is more than willing to provide support.

Mr. Mayer also provides some insight into how seniors can create the best Senior Project possible: "Planning is everything. We tell Seniors to think about it in early November, since it is a common pattern with past senior projects that planning before results in a more successful and rewarding experience." It is also vital to know that these are not lighthearted projects students work on for an hour a day while relaxing for the rest. Mr. Mayer explains that "these projects are intended to replace school. That's around four hours of classes and an hour or two of homework, so you're expected to work five to six hours per day. This is a vast amount of time, so I also want to stress how important it is to pick

something you love doing."

With all this essential information in mind, here are a few Senior Project ideas PDS's graduating seniors plan to do. Senior Aaliyah Sayed says she is "designing, building, manufacturing, and selling a board game to teach people daily eco-friendly habits." Senior Vinay Rao plans to do an internship at Purdue University where he will be "working with a professor to simulate mitigation techniques for COVID-19 and the optimal way to distribute vaccines through the programming language R." Senior Emery Oliver says he will be "playing as many different golf courses as possible, then writing a unique type of story about each one."

Although the program is not fully back to normal yet, it is expected that next spring the regular schedule will resume. Seniors are excited to share their work with the PDS community in the coming months. □



# PDS Observes Transgender Day of Visibility

REED DILLON, X  
PRINT OPINIONS EDITOR

Transgender Day of Visibility took place on March 31 and was celebrated within Princeton Day School through the distribution of free trans pride flags and stickers, generously given out by the Glow coheads—juniors Joe Lippman (he/him) and Neha Kalra (they/them). The support amassed in PDS on LGBTQ+ days of awareness, such as National Coming Out Day or Transgender Day of Visibility, is always inspiring. Several anonymous members of Pride shared their excitement surrounding this day and what it meant to them. Lippman added, “It’s vitally important that we celebrate the trans community at PDS. Every single bit of visibility matters, because that could be the difference between whether or not somebody feels comfortable enough to come out or be open about their identity. The reality is that no matter what, you are valid and you have every right to live life as authentically you as possible.”

**Every single bit of visibility matters, because that could be the difference between whether or not somebody feels comfortable enough to come out or be open about their identity.**

Walking down the halls while almost every student dons a pride sticker of some sort truly makes the school feel like a welcoming community. Another member shared, “[Trans Day of Visibility] allows others to admit our legitimacy and our validity.”

Unfortunately, that same energy is not visible year-round, nor is the eagerness to join in the celebration and appreciation of LGBTQ+ history, pride, and culture. Members of Pride spoke on what LGBTQ+ allies can do to stay informed and normalize the queer experience at PDS. Lippman said, “Students should be putting pronouns in their Zoom name, Schoology bio, and maybe even email signatures.” We must standardize the use of pronouns in our school community. For those comfortable sharing their pronouns, putting them in your Zoom name is a great place to start. How someone presents physically, “masculine” or “feminine,” does not determine the pronouns they identify with. All members of the Princeton Day community should be aware of pronouns and their significance.

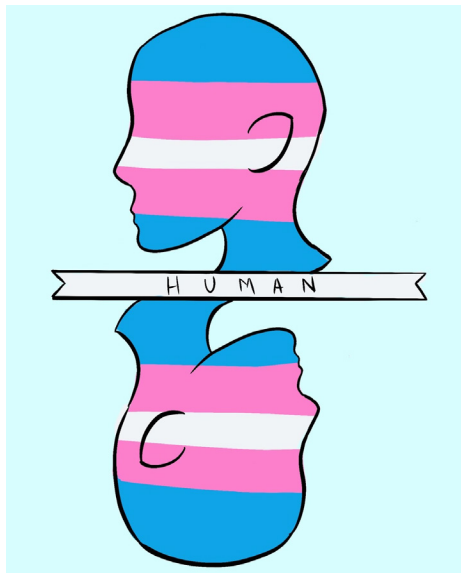
Another Pride member stated, “Ask about the confidentiality of pronouns and names.” In the event that this information is released to parents, it may result in an uncomfortable situation for the student. While a student may feel comfortable sharing their pronouns at school, that may not be the case at home. Some transgender/nonbinary people choose a different name for themselves, often one that reflects the gender they are instead of the one they were assigned at birth. Several people brought up the idea

of a pronoun circle, in which at the beginning of the year, a class would go around and share their names and pronouns. In addition, teachers could ask how they should refer to the student in interactions with their parents: which name and pronouns to use then.

While getting someone’s pronouns or name wrong may seem like a minor mistake, it is important to be aware of how that misgendering could affect trans/nonbinary people who face that lack of respect towards their pronouns more often than a cisgender person. Misgendering and deadnaming (calling a trans/nonbinary person by the name they were given at birth that is traditionally used for a gender they do not identify with) can hurt people; its impact should not be minimized.

For some this may seem like a lot of information; however, as one Pride member pointed out, “Even people in the LGBTQ+ community don’t know everything about the community.” The truth is we are all learning and hopefully helping each other to do so. Casual homophobia and transphobia are taught through the lack of LGBTQ+ diversity in media or a child’s life. Once a person opens themselves up to new things, they can unlearn ignorance. Lippman voiced his opinion on these issues of homophobia and transphobia in the PDS community: “Homophobia and transphobia are never okay. While that may seem obvious, I would hope that anybody who thinks that being LGBTQ+ is a ‘choice’ or that it’s a ‘lifestyle’ soon comes to understand that we’re just the same as everybody else.”

A great place to start learning about the LGBTQ+ community is Glow, a group run by Lippman and Kalra that discusses LGBTQ+ issues. It is not limited to LGBTQ+ identifying people, but rather open to all who want to learn. Pride is an affinity group meant only for those who identify as LGBTQ+, and all interactions are confidential. Lippman spoke on this as well: “To anybody who might be questioning their sexuality or gender identity, please come to Glow and Pride! Confidentiality in Pride is a must... Reach out to any of the LGBTQ+ student leaders or the teacher advisors, because we would love to have you. You are valid and loved!”



Trans Day of Visibility celebrates the trans community (Artwork/Amelia Lytkowski '24)



Juniors and Glow co-heads Joseph Lippman and Neha Kalra lead a Glow meeting about anti-trans legislation (Photo/Eleanor Ding '22)

## Teacher Profile: Mr. Hirniak

BOLIN SHEN, XI  
PRINT ARTS EDITOR

Fine Arts and Media Studies teacher Jerry Hirniak has taught at PDS since 1992. He specializes in multimedia work and maintains a concurrent teaching and studio practice.

**What’s your favorite thing about PDS?**

The students. The classes that I teach, the amazing work and the students I get to work with, my colleagues in the Arts department. But mostly it’s just the amazing quality of students, their involvement, their engagement, their skill sets, their ability to work and the complicated ways from which they approach their ideas... It’s the students.

**Any favorite memory from your time at PDS?**

I’ve been here for a very long time, so my memories really all kind of go back to studio work with students, back to the old studio before we moved into this new building. The intensity of the kind of work we are doing, the senior projects, have always been amazing. Shows, just doing student shows. I started doing the senior project art shows in the 90s and every year it would be a celebration: we would be planning,

making cards, and having a big opening, celebrating all the seniors leaving, and this big monumental moment in their lives. And having my children, both of my boys came to school with me, so that was a really amazing period here for me, with my kids being students here.

**What is your favorite place in PDS?**

The studio, mystudio, of course. Right now it would be the Burn, the garden, what Mr. Rempe has done with the greenhouse. I think the Burn is my favorite spot right now—over my entire time at PDS, I’ve always taken students out there for walks, we’ve always used it as a site; I frequently take a walk around the Burn and eat my lunch as a kind of walking lunch. I do my walking meditations around the Burn, I just love that peaceful country setting; and the indentation always reminds me of a Maya Lin site.

**What inspired you to become a teacher?**

Hmm, what inspired me to become a teacher? I think I kind of fell into it by accident. I had started my career as an artist, in the early 70s, and I had always worked with photography and drawing and painting, and someone came to me and asked me if I wanted to teach a class at Dawson College in large format photography and



Mr. Hirniak’s office is decorated with his past work (Photo/Eleanor Ding '22)



## Teacher Profile: Mr. Hirniak (cont'd)

color theory, and I went, “OK!” I didn’t know much about large format photography, I didn’t know much about color theory in photography, but I thought it would be an interesting challenge, and so I started it. And then I started running workshops, working with dancers, and doing workshops in photography and dancing and theatre, and I loved it. I loved being with other people who were curious, interested, wanted to learn, and wanted to share what they were doing. And I always just loved the challenge of taking the responsibility for a body of knowledge and sharing it. And then everything sort of just happened. I’ve juggled two careers all my life: being a studio artist and a teacher. In a way it saved me from having to see my studio production as economic, that I had to make my living with it, so it freed me in a way. The last forty years really have been about juggling teaching and studio, and what happened eventually was that they just became interwoven: my teaching informs my studio work, my studio work informs my teaching. It just became a fabric of my life.

### What is your relationship to Art and how you approach Fine Art and teaching it?

That’s a tough one. In terms of teaching it, my main goal in teaching art is to lay the foundation for some things that I feel are essential: feeling connected to a community, to history; understanding the complicated commitment that artists have to make in terms of time, in terms of learning multiple skill sets; making

a commitment to not knowing, the ambiguity and the ongoing question of “what it is that I want to say?” and how it comes through to find meaning and resonance. And I think for me as an artist it’s the same thing. I started out as a writer, and my goal as a writer was to simply communicate human experience, a human condition in all of its complexity. And it’s never easy. When you walk into the studio it’s always a big question mark. But there is something about that question mark that makes life so rich, because everything has meaning, everything has complexity, everyone brings something. So I think it’s that connection to being alive, being a human being and being connected to community, to history, to a desire to make things.

### Are there any projects that you are currently working on in the Studio?

I’m trying to plan this last studio show, and this show will be from all the recycled, throw-away work from students. So it’s kind of just taking the detritus of the studio and remaking it so that’s going to be my last show in the studio and I’m very excited about it.

### What is one thing that you would like to say to your students?

Thank you. I mean just having students over the years has been a true gift, it’s the thing that brings joy every day in my life. Stay involved. Be committed. Understand that you have a voice in the world, that you can be voices of change, that you have so much possibility. □



Mr. Hirniak in the Fine Arts studio (Photo/Eleanor Ding '22)

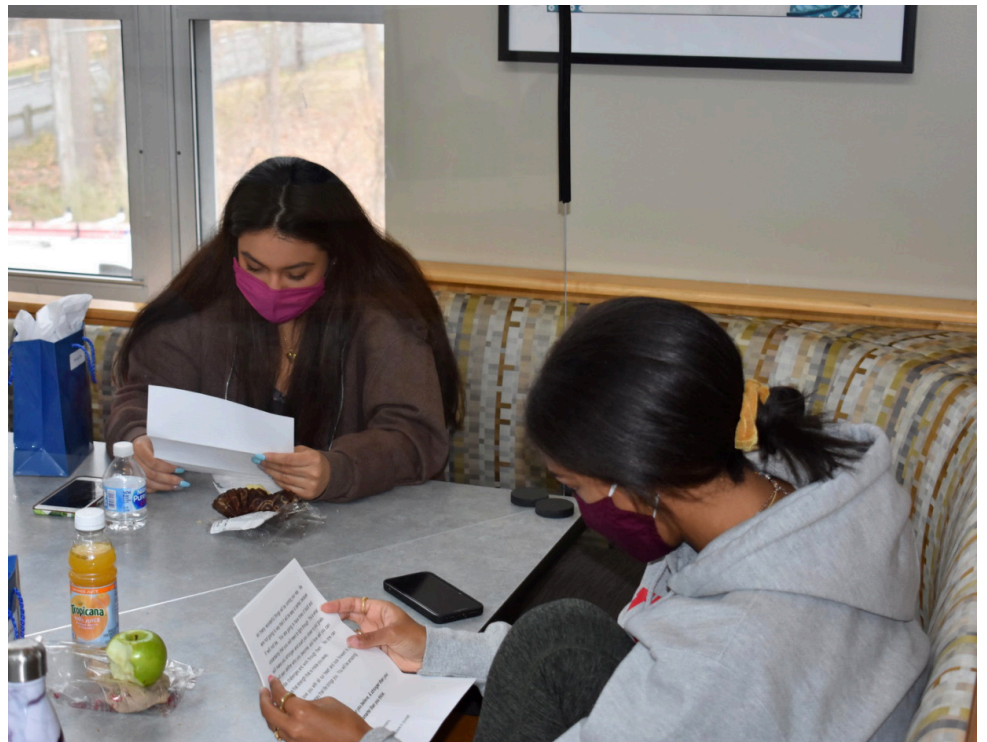
## Senior Breakfast Photospread



Seniors gather in the campus center for senior breakfast



Seniors Brendan Chia, Aaron Chu, Vinay Rao, and Saahith Potluri spend time together in the campus center



Seniors Britney Chia and Kelly Beal read letters sent by parents



Seniors Skye Harris, Jenny Zhang, Caroline Topping, and Natasha Ray enjoy the senior gathering (Photo/PDS Flickr)



# Spring Fashion: Denim Jackets and Sneakers

STELLA RINGBLOM, XI  
FRANCES BOBBITT, XI  
FASHION COLUMNISTS

Some of my favorite things are happening right now: the sun is shining, the weather is gorgeous, more students are returning to school, and most importantly, spring fashion is here! If that does not put a smile on your face, I don't know what will. Every season has its pros and cons, except spring; spring hits differently. Anyway, enough rambling; let's talk about how to prepare for spring. Frances and I have decided to make this article a bit different from the last one. As a brief reminder, in the previous article, we discussed how to gear up for winter with four simple outfits. For this article, we're doing something similar but adding a twist by focusing on styling one specific clothing article and one type of shoe. Drum roll..... we will be focusing on how to style denim jackets and retro sneakers. Yes, I know, genius! We thought this seemed fitting because both things are worn so

frequently during the spring, and everyone can wear both. You're welcome, boys: this article is for you too. Thank us later. Now, get a pen and paper ready for notetaking!

**Stella:** Outfit number one is for the girls or honestly for anyone who loves to wear dresses. Dresses are a spring staple in my closet. I can't get enough of them. They are so easy to throw on with a pair of sneakers and a jacket and run out the door. My current favorite store to get any type of dress is Zara. They offer a wide selection of dresses: long, short, simple, electric, hectic, patterns, you name it. My current favorite dress to wear is either a skater dress or a t-shirt dress. Both are so comfortable and cute, and they come in all different patterns. During the spring, I love to wear bright colors and floral patterns because it makes me feel like a walking flower. Just kidding, I'm not crazy. But, in all seriousness, bright colors are just a necessity for the spring. Now, let's talk about how this can be worn with a denim jacket. Don't be silly; not much thinking is needed to put these

two pieces together. You just need to put the jacket over the dress. That's it. So simple, but it adds so much and is perfect for those chiller mornings or nights. Of course, I have to give Zara another shoutout and say that they don't only have classic denim jackets, but they also sell them in different colors and styles. I got a lavender one last spring, and I'm still obsessed. It's the perfect oversized fit, and the color is the perfect shade! I always get so many compliments on it whenever I wear it. I also have to mention that if you aren't a dress person, you can obviously choose a skirt instead or even a pair of jeans (any color) and turn it into a full denim look!



Making use of denim  
(Photo/Stella Ringblom '22)

Before Frances introduces her looks, I need to throw in a quick outfit suggestion for the boys as promised. Denim jackets for you guys can be thrown over a t-shirt with shorts, sweats, or jeans, paired with a cap and sneakers.

**Frances:** Hey everyone! Stella tackled what clothes she is currently liking so now that leaves me the footwear. I personally have turned away from typical running shoes and sneakers with engineered materials towards more simple, retro styles. Retro can be anything before the 2000s, so think Adidas Stan Smiths, Nike Air Max 90s, and Reebok Club C 85s. By wearing shoes composed of mainly mesh, leather, and



A retro style combination  
(Photo/Frances Bobbitt '22)

nubuck (a durable type of suede), it allows your outfit to feel less sporty and casual and a bit more appropriate for everyday wear rather than the gym. The fun thing about these shoes is that they come in a wide variety of colors. My favorite pair of retro runners is a Nike Waffle Racer with an outsole that is directly taken from the original Nike Waffle shoes that Phil Knight made for his athletes at the University of Oregon back when Nike was known as Blue Ribbon Sports. They are in a blue and yellow colorway which feels very spring ready. They provide enough comfort for me to consider them to be walking shoes and I get a lot of compliments on them. Runners can be worn with just about anything and I like to throw mine on with some blue jeans and a neutral colored t-shirt to let the colors be the center of attention.

As always, we hope you were inspired by something you read and found an outfit you would like to try! Our main goal is always to show how simple fashion is and that there is a style for everyone.

# Seniors in Theater: Adapting to the Pandemic

YVONNE WANG, XI  
STAFF WRITER

Since March 2020, PDS has introduced a series of policies in response to the ongoing pandemic. During this difficult time, in-person theater activities were brought to a temporary end. For seniors involved in theater, the cancellation of the plays for the 2020-2021 school year may mean the end of their high school theatre career. Senior Ritika Kumar, who has previously participated in several PDS productions, expressed her frustration that this school year, there is no longer the feeling of excitement with the cast and crew backstage during the weeks of preparation for the shows.

Despite these obstacles, the PDS theater community has been experimenting with new ways to continue pursuing its passion for acting. In the fall, the theater department launched a playwriting competition that was open to all Upper School students. The five winning short plays, all drafted by the students, were later performed by PDS Upper School students both in and out of the

theater, and were conducted under COVID-19 safety measures or through ZOOM. Due to the uncertainty of the pandemic, the theater group is still discussing plans for future activities. Senior Aleksei Darenkov mentions that it is hard to find a place

to rehearse that includes everyone in the play: due to social distancing rules, only a few people would be allowed within the space at a time. Right now, the PDS Theater is in the process of organizing a small production with the hope

that COVID-19 is going to be under control soon. On the other hand, PDS seniors have sought out other ways to occupy their time. To stay connected in the realm of acting, Kumar has decided to apply to some open-call auditions

for TV shows: "I have always wanted to apply for 'real-world' auditions, so I am so glad that I finally decided to do it!" In addition, she is producing and singing music for her senior project—creating an EP. Senior Holly Teti, who has been involved in theater for years, also says that she spends her time reading plays, singing and playing guitar, a skill she learned for the musical last year.

With students actively exercising and furthering their knowledge and love towards music and acting through diverse ways, the PDS theater community endeavors to preserve its spirit within the context of COVID-19. The single highest priority is safety, whether we are in a pandemic or even a regular year. As Director of Performing & Fine Arts/Design Stan Cahill says, "So if it means that we need to limit our activities to keep the community safe, that is what we'll do...An exciting season of US premiere productions is already in the works. This will end. And when it does, we'll be ready."



COVID-19 threatening to disrupt theater activities (Photo/Kayla Zhang '24)



## Reinventing The Gallery Club to Operate Online

AVA FONG, X  
STAFF WRITER

During the pandemic, the arts department at PDS has found new and innovative ways to work around the challenges posed by new forms of learning. Whether it is in music, fine arts, photography, or film, PDS students have succeeded in keeping the arts alive.

One way students have involved themselves in the arts during the pandemic is with managing the school's Anne Reid '72 gallery. Once the pandemic hit, the Anne Reid '72 Art Gallery was forced to shut down, putting a stop to any future in-person exhibits for the time being. Paintings were stripped from walls, installations were removed, walls were repainted, and Upper School Fine Arts teacher Jerry Hirniak's film studio took the place of what used to be the Anne Reid '72 Gallery.

Junior Linda Qu, one of the club's coheads, stated: "I definitely miss the food and the music at gallery openings and especially the opportunity to stroll through physical art pieces." Students

can no longer wander into the gallery to admire faculty and professional work. Once the pandemic set in, the school suddenly didn't have a venue to showcase art for the first time in years.

As a response to this challenge, student members of the gallery club created the Anne Reid '72 Art Gallery website using Squarespace this past year. Regarding the website, Gallery club cohead junior Mehak Dhaliwal stated: "We still wanted to keep the club going, so we turned to the next best thing: using what everyone else seemed to rely on during the pandemic: technology!"

Technology played a big role in keeping the gallery alive this year—whether that would be scheduling club meeting Zoom calls with

Gallery club faculty advisor Jody Erdman, designing the interface for the website, or interviewing various established artists over Zoom. Dhaliwal said that "by creating a gallery website, the Gallery club gained a focus for our meetings and outside work: keeping the spirit of the Anne Reid '72 Art Gallery alive, albeit virtually."



A QR code for the new website  
(Photo/Ava Fong '23)

The website project took several months to complete, and now includes works from multiple established artists such as Barbara Vaughn and Tony Upton. Additionally, student and teacher exhibitions curated by club members are held on the online site, including some of Upper School English Teacher

### Anne Reid '72 Art Gallery

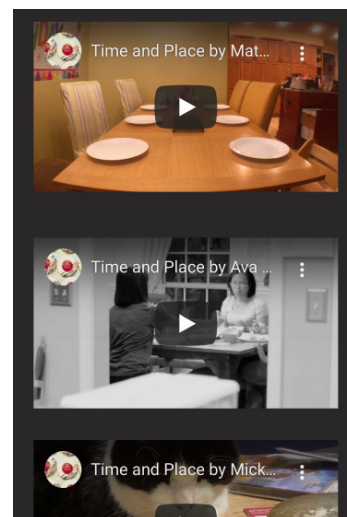


A sneak peak at the new website  
(Photo/Ava Fong '23)

Teacher Thomas Quigley's paintings. Qu also curated an online Greek Mythology exhibition—sourcing, curating, and approving images from museums such as The Museum of Fine Arts, The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, and the Smithsonian. Due to the online format of this year's gallery, Dhaliwal was able to curate poems from her Spanish class and pair them with images to form a separate exhibition on the site as well.

Qu explained: "Since the physical gallery space has essentially been taken over as an arts classroom, it took us a while to develop a cyberspace in which we could exhibit and present art just like we did before Covid, albeit virtually and not in-person."

Qu continued: "Setting up the website was definitely quite a task, but thanks to our dedicated Ava, we were able to present something wonderful. Over all, I'd say we've adapted to the virtual space well, and I see us keeping the website even after we get the physical gallery space back." □



Time & Place films by the Media class  
(Photo/Frances Bobbitt '22)



The new Gallery Club logo  
(Photo/Ava Fong '23)

## Disney Has Done it Again: *Raya and the Last Dragon*

FRANCES BOBBIT, XI  
STAFF WRITER

The studio that brought you *Moana* and *Frozen* is back with their most recent animated film: *Raya and the Last Dragon*. The movie takes place in the land of Kumandra, once a peaceful land where humans and dragons lived together harmoniously. Many years ago, Kumandra was invaded by a villainous force that turned people into terracotta stone statues: the Druun. To combat this evil, the dragons united into a magical stone themselves, and, with the help of a dragon named Sisu, they saved humanity. The magical stone resided with the Heart tribe, but once it was stolen, it fragmented into five pieces which were scattered across the land. The main protagonist Raya, voiced by Kelly Marie Tran, is the warrior princess of the Heart tribe. Raya's father told her the story of the last dragon all of her life in hopes to one day reunite the lands. Raya goes on a quest to find Sisu, voiced by Awkwafina, the last dragon and the only one who can restore peace to

the lands. Along the way, they encounter several memorable supporting characters who all have been affected by the fragmentation of the stone. The movie follows Raya's adventures to find the fragments and piece together the divided nation.

The movie was released on March 5 with a box office gross in the USA of \$28.7M and a warm reception, both critically as well as from the public. *Raya and the Last Dragon* is Disney's first animated film to feature Southeast Asian characters and is filled with Southeast Asian cultural inspiration, from the food to the mythology to the inspiration for each character's clothing. While Disney tries to place itself as socio-politically relevant, the movie gives young Southeast Asian girls someone they can see themselves in. These are all strong points, but sometimes the desire to appeal to and relate to a wide group of people causes the non-Western culture being depicted to feel monolithic. In *Raya*, Disney did not focus on one Southeast Asian culture, rather drawing from

many and thus combining and condensing at their own discernment. Some also pointed out that while the movie does have Southeast Asian characters, the majority of the cast are East Asian voice actors. Overall, however, it is refreshing to see Disney broaden their horizons both culturally and thematically, steering away from the realm of the traditional Western castle princess into one of the independent heroines as previously seen in *Brave* and *Moana* and now in *Raya and the Last Dragon*.

Not only does *Raya and the Last Dragon* deliver in its storyline, it also features an ambitious and striking setting with its combination of imagery and mythology. Don Hall, the Disney veteran, and Carlos López Estrada, the new kid on the block, have come together as directors for this movie. The setting feels both classic and fresh. The world is fully realized with its vibrant color palette and remarkable detail. Some viewers did say that it felt overly dense with imagery though, with the directors getting too caught

up in the world they were creating, causing them to neglect their main character, Raya. However, this is not very noticeable as the rest of the universe is rich with culture and detail.

*Raya and the Last Dragon* is available in movie theaters as well as through Disney Plus Premier Access, the purchase option that

debuted with the release of *Mulan* that enables members to pay an extra one-time \$30 fee to get early streaming access to a movie. It can also be purchased through Amazon Prime Video. With the engaging adventure-filled plot, humor, and stellar animation, this is a must-watch for the whole family. □



Karie Marie Tran, who voices Raya (Photo/Wikimedia Commons)



## PDS Track and Field Club Launches Successfully

TIMOTHY FONG, XI  
NEWS ASSOCIATE

The Track and Field club at Princeton Day School, coached by Mark Adams and John Woodside, is the culmination of the work of many coaches, alumni, and athletes. According to PDS Director of Athletics and Physical Education Katherine Fay, “There has been interest in a Track and Field program from students and coaches in our community for some time. A number of students have put together strong proposals for starting up some sort of Track and Field team over the last couple of years. The field house in the new Princeton Day School Athletic Center gives us additional space that we did not have before for training in some specific events. This, coupled with the School’s commitment to health and wellness and providing opportunities to ample fitness options for students, were the driving forces behind allowing

us to pilot the Track and Field program this spring.” The variety of Track and Field events provides opportunities for students from many different sports backgrounds to try out something new.



Practicing hurdles on Krueger Field  
(Photo/Kacey Fisher '22)



The team gathered by the track  
(Photo/Kacey Fisher '22)

The number of events in the Track and Field club have attracted the attention of many athletes from other sports and across different grade levels. Running events such as the 100m and 200m sprints may



Practicing high jump indoors  
(Photo/Kacey Fisher '22)



Preparing for a relay race  
(Photo/Kacey Fisher '22)

be enjoyable for students who want to try out a running event but not have the stamina for long distance runs; the 5km and 10km long distance events provide a fun experience for students coming from cross country. Other events like discus and shotput are also popular. In addition, the construction of the Athletic Center has allowed students to train for the high jump and long jump. Being able to choose and specialize in a certain event is a unique aspect of Track and Field that sets it apart from other sports.

The team already has meets scheduled with other schools such as Pennington and Hun in the coming weeks. The future of Track and Field at PDS looks promising, and Ms. Fay says, “We certainly hope this program will thrive and that it will make sense to keep it going moving forward.” The initial weeks of Track and Field have been a success, and it will be exciting to see how Track and Field develops over the next few years. □

## Baylor Wins March Madness Filled with Upsets

SAM ELKIN, IX  
STAFF WRITER

As March Madness came to an end on April 5, the Baylor Bears came out on top, defeating the Gonzaga Bulldogs 86-70 to win their first ever NCAA Division I Men’s Basketball Championship. The Final Four this year was exciting and included the 1-seeded Gonzaga Bulldogs, 1-seeded Baylor Bears, 11-seeded UCLA Bruins, and the 2-seeded Houston Cougars.

Of course, it wouldn’t be March Madness without the Cinderella stories (major upsets by teams that were unexpected to win) that always show up to the Big Dance. To start, the 15-seeded Oral Roberts Golden Eagles defeated the 2-seeded Ohio State Buckeyes 75-72 in overtime in the first round, busting brackets across the country. Max Abmas, the nation’s leading scorer, dropped 29 points on the Buckeyes to help the Golden Eagles seize the victory. However, Oral Roberts’ journey didn’t stop there, as they went on to beat the 7-seeded Florida Gators in the round of 32, becoming the second 15-seeded team to make the Sweet Sixteen in tournament history. Unfortunately, they lost in the Sweet Sixteen to the 3-seeded Arkansas Razorbacks in a close matchup (72-70), losing at the buzzer when Max Abmas missed a 3 point shot for the win. Had Abmas made the shot, the Golden Eagles would have advanced to the Elite 8. Freshman Will Maschler mentioned, “I wish Oral Roberts made that three pointer. It was so

disappointing to see the underdogs lose.”

The Golden Eagles weren’t the only Cinderella story in this year’s tournament, however. The 12-seeded Oregon State Beavers and 11-seeded UCLA Bruins both made it to the Elite 8, an unusually successful run for the low-seeded teams. The 11-seeded Bruins also defeated the 1-seeded Michigan Wolverines in the Elite 8, tying the March Madness record for lowest-seeded team to advance to the Final Four.

In addition to the Cinderellas, there were many other dominant teams in this year’s tournament. No mention of March Madness would be complete without noting the dominance of the 1-seeded Gonzaga Bulldogs throughout the tournament. With the lead of first team All-American Corey Kispert, second team All-American Jalen Suggs (a projected top 5 pick in the 2021 NBA Draft) and Drew Timme, the Bulldogs were full of talent and success. Gonzaga advanced to the tournament finals after Jalen Suggs hit a three point buzzer beater from near half court, sending the UCLA Bruins home with a score of 93-90. When asked about the success of Gonzaga in this year’s tournament, freshman Harry Epstein noted that, “Gonzaga was the best team in the country and their record showed it. I mean they were 31-0, and I just could not see them losing.” However, this undefeated season came to an end in their championship loss to Baylor. Nevertheless, their incredible undefeated season is

still very impressive.

Although the tournament was slightly different this year due to COVID-19, there is one tradition that remained constant: the filling out of brackets across the country. Regardless of knowledge about college basketball, almost everyone across the country filled out a bracket, hoping that it would remain perfect, until the inevitable upset just to end their hopes and dreams.

At PDS, Juniors Nik Gandhi and Zach Law created a bracket pool for all members of the PDS community to fill out a bracket of their own and compete for the grand prize of a \$50 Visa gift card and an engraving on the PDS March Madness trophy.

Many people entered the pool, but junior Jonah Soos, who correctly picked Baylor to win the tournament, ended up winning the pool. The PDS bracket pool was a great way to connect the PDS community over a shared love for college basketball.

After weeks of “Madness,” the all tournament team selections were Gonzaga’s Drew Timme and Jalen Suggs, UCLA’s Johnny Juzang, and Baylor’s Davion Mitchell and Jared Butler. Ultimately, this year’s Men’s March Madness tournament was a good one as always and many from PDS enjoyed filling out their brackets and watching the action-packed tournament games.

□



The Baylor Bears defeated Gonzaga, winning the Championship (Artwork/Zoe Latanision '23)





Girls Varsity Basketball takes on the opposing team (Photo/PDS Flickr)



PDS fencers dominating (Photo/PDS Flickr)



Riley Welles '24 mid-swing (Photo/PDS Flickr)



Boys Varsity Hockey facing off with their opponents on the ice (Photo/PDS Flickr)



Nico Cucchi '23 controlling the court (Photo/PDS Flickr)



Albert Ming '22 hitting a shot (Photo/PDS Flickr)



Girls Varsity Hockey together on the ice (Photo/PDS Flickr)



Boys Varsity Basketball commanding the game (Photo/PDS Flickr)



## Effects of Patents on Global Healthcare?

JAI KASERA, X  
OPINIONS ASSOCIATE

Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, companies have been racing to create the most effective, low-cost vaccine. Currently, some of the U.S. frontrunners include Pfizer, Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson, which have already sold hundreds of millions of vaccines. However, there is increasing pressure and criticism on these companies to give up their patents, or their rights to solely produce and sell their vaccines. This would allow other companies to create the vaccines they invented and sell them to make a profit. Moderna announced that they will give away the patent on their mRNA-based vaccine, but Pfizer and Johnson & Johnson have not promised the same. Although making companies who have engineered working COVID-19 vaccines give up their patents may seem like the best way to distribute the COVID-19 vaccines faster, it should not be done as there are various ethical, even dangerous, issues in doing so.

First and foremost, companies should reserve the right to keep what is theirs.

These companies have worked tirelessly to develop these vaccines; for the world to take these inventions away from their creators would be unfair. As an anonymous student put it, “We’re a capitalist society. What pushes us forward is change. If we force companies to give up their products, we set a dangerous precedent that will [undermine] the reason why we have patents — to protect intellectual property.” Companies like Pfizer and Moderna made their vaccines with their own research and technology, and they should not be obligated to give up their hard work for other companies to profit off.

Giving away patents will also increase risks for patients. By increasing the number of companies who manufacture the vaccines, it is more likely that mistakes will be made and some vaccines will cause serious harm to patients. PDS Nurse Nina Keller added, “Having Pfizer, Moderna and J&J which are all American companies control the research and distribution, they can guarantee every US citizen will receive a vaccine that went through a controlled clinical trial. With controlled patents, there is less room for error.” By limiting vaccine manufacturers to a select few companies that have proven

to be able to create relatively safe vaccines, unnecessary harm and deaths can be avoided.

There are, however, conflicting views in the PDS community. Sophomore Navaneeth Rajan expressed his opinion, “The problem with enforcing patents on Coronavirus vaccines is that it enables a semi-monopolization of the market for the vaccines, allowing for unethical practices including a lack of distribution in developing countries, which

has already been seen with the vaccine as of yet, and increased vaccination prices, shutting out the very same poor, minority communities who were hit hardest by the pandemic.” Although this concern is not unwarranted, removing the patent will actually likely cause the number of COVID-19 vaccines to decline, not increase. This is because some materials used in the vaccines are in high demand, and if every company were to race to create the vaccines,

they would be competing against one another for these materials and distribute even fewer vaccines to developing countries than there are right now.

Furthermore, Johnson & Johnson and AstraZeneca have pledged not to earn profits on their vaccines until the pandemic ends. These companies understand the need for as many vaccines as possible at this time and the value of human lives over the chance of a big payday. However, by forcing these companies to give away their patents, they will never earn profits they deserve in the future. Since these companies are already sacrificing their profits right now to save the world from the pandemic, they should not be punished with prevention from ever earning profits on their vaccines in the future

Although keeping the patents may seem to slow down the production and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines, it is actually the opposite: patents, though not perfect, will likely save the most human lives as possible. Additionally, forcing companies to remove their patents infringes on their rights to their own inventions, the basis upon which patents were created.



The outpouring of vaccines (Artwork/Yvonne Wang 22')

## Online College Tours: Pro

ESHAA DOSHI, XI  
STAFF WRITER

March 2021: the one year anniversary of quarantine and lackluster online meetings. Thinking back to this time should make most shiver, remembering eating “for fun” or doing 2,000 piece jigsaw puzzles or attending four group Zooms a

week.

Although meeting online dampens the excitement that comes with seeing other humans, an opportunity to visit colleges without expensive or stressful travel plans has arisen in the form of virtual tours. So when the classes of 2023, 2022, and 2021 started to think about which school they wanted to attend for the next four

years, they were forced to open their laptops and clack their keyboards, searching for various schools’ online college tours.

The pros of online college tours are obvious; they are a great way to familiarize yourself with a school’s location and classes without risking the spread of SARS-CoV-2 or leaving your couch. They also help students visit

areas where they would not be able to go otherwise due to financial or geographical reasons.

When asked her opinion on online college tours, College Counselor Cynthia Michalak confirmed that, “One of the biggest benefits is that with in-person visits, you are restricted by time and geography, but with virtual

visits, you can visit colleges in California, Texas, and Illinois in one day. Relatedly, if you are considering colleges that are farther away from home, you can explore online tours, information sessions, and student panels before deciding if visiting in person is worth the time and expense for your family.”

## Online College Tours: Con

JACKSON COOK, XI  
SPORTS ASSOCIATE

In a typical year, spring break is a time where many juniors begin to visit college campuses. But this spring break, I found myself spending most days on my couch with a pint of ice cream and my computer, watching countless virtual college tours. In the span of an hour, I could visit schools in California and Maine with an efficiency that would have never been possible in previous years.

However, the tours lacked the personal touches that

make so many people fall in love with the colleges they visit, and they definitely could not compare to walking through colleges and exploring the town around them. Though the junior class has been able to “visit” a much wider assortment of schools from the comfort of their homes, the real drawback of virtual college visits lies on the seniors.

Though the online tours’ design has improved dramatically, touring a school virtually is still a completely different experience from actually being on campus. Students of the class of 2021

are currently hearing back from colleges and deciding what school they will be attending in the coming year; however, many students are stuck selecting which school they will attend without having ever set foot on its campus. College Counselor Sarah Graham noted, “While virtual college tours have never been as informative as they are now, once in the final stages of deciding between colleges, nothing replaces the feeling of physically being on campus and feeling the energy of that school.”



The virtual college touring experience amidst the pandemic (Artwork/Yvonne Wang 22')



## Diversity and Inclusion in the PDS English Department

ELAINE WU, X  
NEWS ASSOCIATE

After the events of the past year, many have realized that systemic racism is not a myth. From Black Lives Matter to recent violence against Asians worldwide, racial conflicts have been brought to the forefront of the public consciousness. Within PDS, students and faculty members have also come to realize that our community is not as inclusive as it may seem. In response to this, our school has made an effort to promote diversity within our campus, such as in the PDS English department.

Lack of diversity is not a new issue in PDS. In fact, numerous students have experienced a racially exclusive environment in English class alone. For example, an anonymous confessor on the @blackatpds Instagram account (an account dedicated to highlighting the experiences of Black PDS alumni and students) expressed feelings of discomfort when reading *To Kill a Mockingbird* in 8th grade English as their teacher would “[try] to justify him saying the n-word,” a word

that appears many times throughout the book. In another confession, a teacher attempted to “give the pass” to students to say the n-word while reading *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. These are not the only instances regarding racism at PDS. In fact, @blackatpds has over 70 entries in the same vein.

PDS has already amended the English curriculum as part of a recent push for diversity. According to English Department Head Karen Latham, the school has “put a pause” on books that could “create an uncomfortable environment,” such as *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* and *Song of Solomon* (both of which contain the n-word). In addition, *To Kill a Mockingbird* has been removed from the 8th grade curriculum. As always, the English department is shifting its focus away from “Eurocentric literature” and choosing literary texts from a wide variety of sources and ethnicities. For example, *Another Brooklyn*, a novel written by Black author Jacqueline Woodson, replaced *Huckleberry Finn* this year.

However, changes in curriculum can’t solve

everything. The incidents in the examples above are not necessarily caused by the books themselves. In fact, it is entirely possible to introduce the n-word in a responsible manner without making students feel out of place, which is what the English department is currently trying to achieve. Acting Head of Upper School Christian Rhodes says that the school has three goals: To understand the purpose of the text and if it is necessary to learn, to make sure the teacher understands how to present the n-word, and to have the teacher understand their presence within the classroom (considering factors such as race, gender, and history).

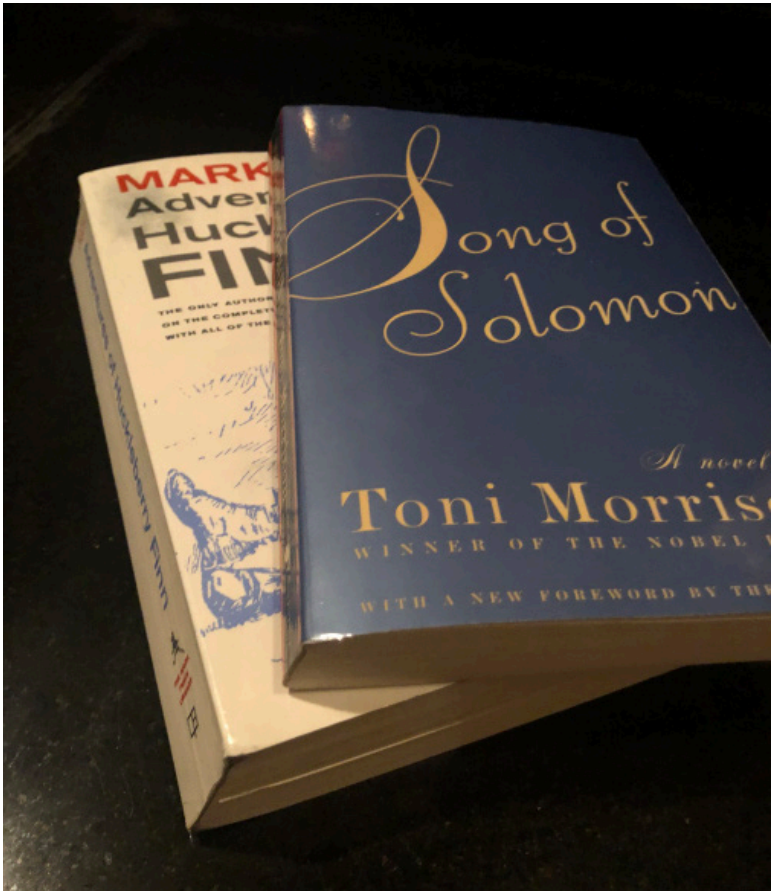
As part of a broader effort, PDS is also working with faculty to foster a safe environment. According to pds.org’s diversity page, a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion “task force” was created last year, involving over 50 members of “faculty, staff, school leaders, students, recent graduates, and parents.” This committee serves to create an inclusive environment in PDS and reports to Head of School Paul Stellato and the school

board periodically. PDS has also held two all-school faculty workshops to discuss race within the school.

Certainly, great strides have been taken by the PDS community. Mr. Rhodes is “proud of the English Department this year” and “pleased that everyone has a clear understanding that there is more work in the future.” So far, PDS has done

an impressive job addressing diversity and inclusion. Hopefully, the school will continue to proceed in this direction while also taking input from the thoughts and opinions of others. Although this process will take a long time, everyone has clearly proven their commitment to the cause.

□



Two of the replaced books at PDS (Photo/Mehak Dhaliwal 22’)





# Spring Semester Word Search

AU SPRINGSPORTS

SENIORPROJECTS

WBIOSUMSEZV

AVALENTINSDAY

RZKINABZCMGENS

MQIWIIYO EORLRE

WDZAOHZOXRAYON

EPEFERKYMII DFOI

ATBICMB SVABUO

TNNRRXQCWL AUJR

HZQKEHVH UDTALI

ELQKDGCO PAIRRT

RYZZOYBOYYOIFI

HGWKSCCL AANQKS

VALENTINES DAY

SENIOR CREDOS

ZOOM SCHOOL

SENIORITIS

GRADUATION


WARM WEATHER

SENIOR PROJECTS

MEMORIAL DAY

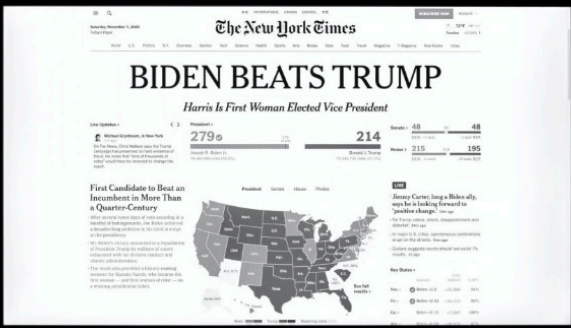
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